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Official Correspondence of -
Brigadier General W. S. Harney,
U. S. A. and
First Lieutenant Geo. Thrie, U. S. A.
with the War Department.
1861.





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OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE

OF

BRIG. GEN. W. S. HARNEY,
U. S. ARMY,

AND

FIRST LT. GEO. IHRIE,
LATE U. S. ARMY,

WITH THE

U. S. WAR DEPARTMENT,

AND SUBSEQUENT

PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE.



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BRIG. GEN. W. S. HAWLEY

1862

UNITED STATES ARMY

1862

1862

U. S. WAR DEPARTMENT

1862

UNITED STATES ARMY

FORT VANCOUVER, W. T., 1st August, 1859.

SIR:—Accompanying please find returns of companies "B" and "D," 3d Artillery, for month of July, 1859.

I desire to call the attention of the Lieutenant Colonel commanding the regiment, to the remarks opposite the names of men furloughed by *ex post facto* order of the General commanding this department, which makes the monthly return of "D" company, and last muster roll, incorrect.

I am, Sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEORGE IHRIE,

First Lieut. 3d Artillery, comd'g companies.

1st Lieut. JOHN C. CHANDLER,

Reg'l Adj't 3d Artillery, Presidio San Francisco, Cal.

HEADQUARTERS THIRD REGIMENT ARTILLERY.

PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO, CAL'A, Aug. 17, 1859.

SIR: I have the honor to furnish, for the information of the Adjutant General, the following extracts from the monthly returns of the companies of the regiment stationed at Fort Vancouver, for the month of July, 1859.

* * * * *

The commander of company "B" reports privates Cassidy and Frainee, "absent with leave since July 23d and 25th, on furlough by order of General Harney, at work on private farm or residence of General Harney." The commander of company "D" reports privates Warkman and Gleason on furlough in vicinity of post, the former since June 17, 1859, the latter since June 25, 1859, reported on furlough, pursuant to instructions from the department of Oregon, dated July 23, 1859, "at work on private farm or residence of General Harney."

* * * * *

In addition, I respectfully enclose herewith a letter from the commander of "D" company, enclosing his return, and calling my attention to the *remarks* which I have herein taken from his return.

These reports being irregular, I forward this information at this time, since the regimental returns on which the same remarks will be transmitted, will not be prepared for two months or more.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

CHAS. S. MERCHANT,

Lieut. Col. 3d Artillery.

Col. S. COOPER,

Adj. Gen. U. S. A., Washington, D. C.

REMARKS.

Regularity of transmission was, in this flagrant case, purposely sacrificed by me to "irregularity," for the purpose of stopping further abuse of authority. I only regret I did not, at the time, "irregularly" report to the Commander-in-Chief, Harney's use of United States transportation, in furtherance of his scheme of peculation.

GEORGE IHRIE,

Late United States Army.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF OREGON,

Fort Vancouver, W. T., December 9, 1859.

COLONEL: I have the honor to return Colonel Merchant's communication and enclosure, with the following explanation, in connexion with the enclosed copies of letters from these headquarters to the commander of Fort Vancouver, dated July 23, and August 4, 1859.

* * * * *

It is proper on this occasion to call the attention of the War Department to the three officers whose reports Colonel Merchant considers irregular.

First Lieutenant George Ihrie, who temporarily commanded "B" and "D" companies, has since tendered his resignation, and I trust, for the honor of the service, it has been accepted. This resignation was hastened by the fact of an officer having testified before the general court-martial which assembled for the trial of First Lieutenant Lyman M. Kellogg, 3d artillery, that he would not believe Lieutenant Ihrie under oath, in any matter in which he was at all interested.

The general opinion of Lieutenant Ihrie's character, with those in the service who know him, is but little better than that above recorded. * *

I am, Colonel, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. S. HARNEY,

Brigadier General Commanding.

Col. S. COOPER,

Adj. Gen. U. S. A. Washington, D. C.

ST. LOUIS, MO., *July 29, 1860.*

Col. S. COOPER, *Adj't Gen. U. S. A.*

SIR: In the "official correspondence of Brigadier General Harney relating to the affairs of the Department of Oregon," published by Congress, is a letter to you, dated December 9, 1859, containing the following statement in regard to me, viz:

"I trust, for the honor of the service, Lieutenant Ihrie's resignation has been accepted. This resignation was hastened by the fact of an officer having testified before the general court martial which assembled for the trial of First Lieutenant L. M. Kellogg, 3d artillery, that he would not believe Lieutenant Ihrie under oath, in any matter in which he was at all interested. The general opinion of Lieutenant Ihrie's character, with

those in the service who know him, is but little better than that above recorded."

It is my duty to contradict this malicious statement on your records. *There is not a word of truth in it.*

In the first place, my resignation was not hastened by the testimony referred to, of which I was entirely ignorant until nearly eight months after it was given, at which time I read it in Washington in General Harney's extraordinary letter. On the contrary, my resignation was delayed two months by my being suddenly, unexpectedly, and unnecessarily ordered, by General Harney, in command of a battalion of the 3d Artillery, to Fort Steilacoom, W. T., *en route* for the island of San Juan, in dispute between the United States and England.

In the second place, as I have since learned from an examination of the record of the court martial, the testimony is *not* what General Harney states it to be. What the witness said was this: he thought me "strongly and bitterly prejudiced against the accused; that he believed I had preferred the charges out of malice; and that he would not place reliance on my uncorroborated evidence *against the accused.*"

But, even if that witness had testified that he thought me capable of a willful, interested false statement, as reported by General Harney, it was not a thing to give me the least concern.

I had served at the same post with him but a very short time, and, during nearly all that period, had declined all social intercourse with him, principally on account of his disgusting, drunken excesses. He admits, in his testimony, that he "had a misunderstanding with me;" and, as he was the friend, the boon-companion and adviser of the officer then on trial for similar drunken and disgraceful conduct, and *who has since been convicted for the same, and cashiered*, of course nothing could be of less consequence than *his* opinion of the merit of the prosecution and the motive of the principal prosecuting witness.

It was very foolish and reckless in General Harney to make the false statements he has made in this matter.

Not satisfied with this willful and deliberate falsification of an official public record, he goes on to state to you his own *opinion* of me, and thus to offer his character against mine. I am, therefore, justifiable in reminding you that his character, particularly in the army, is anything but enviable, being notorious for profanity, brutality, incompetency, speculation, recklessness, insubordination, tyranny and mendacity.

In addition to this catalogue of vices and iniquities, I charge him with the murder, on the 26th day of June, 1834, in St. Louis, Missouri, of a female slave, named Hannah, whom, after first reducing, by starvation, to a state of emaciation and debility, he bruised and lacerated with a cow-hide to such a horrible and revolting degree of severity that she died the next day from the effects of the wounds and blows he had inflicted upon her person.

For this diabolical murder he would then and there have been hung by the outraged citizens, but for his precipitate flight from the city.

As it is, he is to-day, like many other favored and hardened criminals, indebted for his life to "the law's delay," able counsel, a change of venue,

and other appliances, as potent and influential then, as now, in defrauding the gallows of its legitimate prey.

I assert nothing I cannot prove. The archives of your department and his *status* at the headquarters of the army, where he is best and well known, will corroborate what I have written concerning his reputation, particularly in the army; and, lest any generous acquaintance should be unwilling to credit the last grave and serious charge, I here insert a certified transcript of the official record of the criminal court of St. Louis county in the case of "*State of Missouri vs. William S. Harney, — murder:*"

(*Transcript from St. Louis County:*)

"STATE OF MISSOURI, }
 "County of Franklin, } ss.

"Be it remembered that a circuit court, begun and held at the city of St. Louis, within and for the county of St. Louis, in the third judicial circuit of the State of Missouri, on the fourth Monday of July, being the twenty-eighth day of said month, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-four, before the Honorable Luke E. Lawless, judge of said court. The grand inquest of the State of Missouri for the body of the county of St. Louis aforesaid, sworn and charged to inquire for the body of the county of St. Louis, returned into said court an indictment against William S. Harney for murder, which said indictment is in the words and figures following, to wit:

"(*Indictment.*)

"STATE OF MISSOURI, }
 "County of St. Louis, } scl.

"In the Circuit Court, July term, A. D. 1834.

"The grand jurors of the State of Missouri, impaneled, sworn, and charged to inquire for the body of the county of St. Louis, upon their oath present that William S. Harney, late of said county, not having the fear of God before his eyes, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, on the twenty-sixth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-four, with force and arms, at the county aforesaid, in and upon one Hannah, a slave, in the peace of God then and there being, feloniously, willfully, and of his malice aforethought, did make an assault, and that the said William S. Harney, with a certain cowhide of the value of twenty-five cents, which he, the said William S. Harney, in his right hand then and there had and held, the said Hannah in and upon the head, stomach, sides, back, arms, and legs of her, the said Hannah, then and there feloniously, willfully, and of his malice aforethought, did strike, beat, bruise, and cut, giving to the said Hannah then and there, with the cowhide aforesaid, in and upon the head, stomach, sides, back, arms, and legs of her, the said Hannah, several mortal bruises, of which said several mortal bruises the said Hannah, from the said twenty-sixth day of June, in the year aforesaid, until the twenty-

seventh day of the same month, in the year aforesaid, at the county aforesaid, did languish, and languishing did live, on which twenty-seventh day of June, in the year aforesaid, the said Hannah, at the county aforesaid, of the said mortal bruises died; and so the jurors aforesaid, upon their oath aforesaid, do say that the said William S. Harney, the said Hannah, in manner and form aforesaid, feloniously, willfully, and of his malice aforethought, did kill and murder, contrary to the form of the statute in such case, and made and provided and against the peace and dignity of the State.

“BEVERLY ALLEN, *Circuit Attorney.*”

And on the said indictment is an endorsement made by the foreman of the said grand jury, as follows, to wit:

“(Endorsement.)

“A true bill.

“JABEZ WARNER, *foreman.*”

Here follow four separate and distinct legal forms of a *capias* and *alias capias* from the clerk of the court, “commanding” the sheriff “to take William S. Harney, if he be found in his county, and bring him before the judge of the court to answer to an indictment for murder:” on the three first of which the sheriff returns: “William S. Harney not found in my county.”

After the fourth *alias capias* was issued the following entry was made on the records of the said court, to wit:

“In vacation, clerk’s office of the St. Louis Circuit Court, Wednesday, 5th November, 1834.

“(Application for change of venue.)

“THE STATE OF MISSOURI,	} Murder.
vs.	
“WILLIAM S. HARNEY.	

“TO BEVERLY ALLEN,

“Circuit attorney within and for the third judicial circuit.

“SIR: Take notice that on Monday, the 10th instant, between the hours of nine in the forenoon and six in the afternoon I will apply to the judge of the St. Louis Circuit Court at his residence for a change of venue in a certain cause now pending in said court for indictment for murder, on account of the prejudice of the inhabitants of said county.

“W. S. HARNEY.

“ST. LOUIS, November 4, 1834.”

* * * * *

“To the honorable the judge of the Circuit Court of the county of St. Louis the petition of William S. Harney respectfully represents:

“That there is now pending, in the Circuit Court of St. Louis county, an indictment against your petitioner for murder, on which he has been arrested and is now in custody to answer the said charge, and that the inhabitants of said county are so prejudiced against him that he cannot

have a fair trial; wherefore he prays that the venue may be changed to some county in which a fair trial may be had according to the form of the statute in such case made and provided.

“W. S. HARNEY.

“Sworn to and subscribed before me this, the 4th day of November, 1834.

PATRICK WALSH,

“Justice of the Peace.”

* * * * *

“(Venue changed to Franklin County.)

“Being satisfied of the truth of the statement contained in the within petition of W. S. Harney, it is hereby ordered that the venue in said case of the State of Missouri *vs.* W. S. Harney be changed from the county of St. Louis, in the 3d judicial circuit, to the county of Franklin, in the 6th judicial circuit of the State of Missouri.

“Given under my hand this 5th day of November, 1834.

“L. E. LAWLESS,

“Judge 3d Judicial Circuit.

“STATE OF MISSOURI, }
“County of St. Louis, } ss.

“I, Archibald Gamble, clerk of the Circuit Court for the county of St. Louis, in the State of Missouri, do certify that the above and foregoing is a true transcript of the record and proceedings in the case of the State of Missouri against William S. Harney on an indictment for murder, as the same now remains of record in my office.

“In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the said court at my office in the city of St. Louis, county [L. s.] and State aforesaid, this eighth day of November, in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-four.

“(Signed) ARCHIBALD GAMBLE, Clerk.”

I would respectfully request, in justice to myself, that this communication be placed on file with the “official correspondence of General Harney relating to the affairs of the Department of Oregon.”

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEORGE IHRIE, late U. S. Army.

REMARKS.

Harney was accordingly tried for murder on the 24th of March, 1835, nine months after the horrible deed was committed, and was acquitted. Considering his position in the army, the lubricating influences of the oil of gold, the experience of his lawyers, and the long time that elapsed before a trial could be had, the result could hardly have been otherwise.

The records of the Criminal Court of St. Louis county also contain several indictments against Harney for assault and battery.

On reading the above letter to a brevet major of the army, he interrupted me at a certain passage by saying, "you might, with equal correctness, have added *cowardice* to your catalogue of delinquencies." I replied, "I have heard several officers express their belief in his utter lack of courage, and intended to test it the first favorable opportunity; that this letter was to place me right on the records of the War Department, and I would ultimately right myself before the public."

GEORGE IHRIE, *late U. S. A.*

JANUARY 12, 1861.

To Brigadier General WILLIAM S. HARNEY, U. S. A.

SIR: Will you have the kindness to designate a place outside the District of Columbia, and the time where and when additional correspondence may pass between us.

This will be handed you by Hon. J. Richard Barret, of St. Louis.

Respectfully,

(Signed)

GEORGE IHRIE.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *January 15, 1861.*

To Mr. GEORGE IHRIE.

SIR: Your note of the 12th instant has been handed me by the Hon. J. Richard Barret.

In reply to that note, I have to inform you I cannot recognize any claim on your part to make the requests you have advanced, and I therefore decline to accede to them.

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

WM. S. HARNEY.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *January 17, 1861.*

To Brigadier General WILLIAM S. HARNEY, U. S. A.

SIR: The offensive reflections contained in your official letter to Lieutenant De Hart, U. S. A., dated 30th July, 1859, were equally insulting to me, inasmuch as I took position with him in his opposition to your official course as commanding officer of the Department of Oregon, concerning your *ex post facto* furloughing of certain enlisted men of the army.

Subsequently, in an official communication to the War Department, dated 9th December, 1859, you made use of language even more insulting to me.

These insults, thus deliberately given, were rendered the more poignant, by reason of the inequality of our military rank.

Upon hearing of your arrival in the east, from Oregon, I addressed you from Binghampton, N. Y. under date of 18th August, 1860, informing you of my intention to seek the first favorable opportunity to hold you personally accountable.

Accordingly, upon your recent arrival in this city, I caused to be delivered to you my note of the 12th instant.

You could not have forgotten the insults given, especially after the letter warning you of my intention: yet, in your reply of the 15th instant, delivered to me the same day by Captain Rufus Ingalls, U. S. A., while you seem fully to apprehend my meaning, you inform me you cannot recognize any claim on my part to request you to meet me outside the District, and you therefore decline.

This is not the first time you have been guilty of a malicious and insulting personal attack, and declined giving the redress demanded. A note of similar import was received by you on a former occasion from an officer of the army, high in rank, and you not only refused his invitation, but arraigned and prosecuted him before a court martial.

I therefore feel justified in now presenting you to the world as a wilful calumniator and an arrant coward.

(Signed) *GEORGE IHRIE, late First Lieutenant,
3d Reg't U. S. Artillery.*

The following correspondence is necessary, as having an important bearing upon the issue:

FORT VANCOUVER, W. T., *July 24, 1859.*

CAPTAIN: On the 23d of this month I received a communication from the adjutant's office at this post, directing me to report certain men, soldiers of "M," company, 3d regiment of Artillery, which I command, on furlough.

I immediately addressed an official note to the post adjutant, requesting that the commanding officer might furnish me at his earliest convenience with the data necessary to make out their furlough papers, a copy of which you will find enclosed. My object in this communication is to appeal to department headquarters against a compliance with the order above referred to, which I do, direct to the headquarters of the department, without referring the matter to the commanding officer of the post.

As the order stated, he was acting pursuant to instructions received from those headquarters.

I make this appeal for the following reasons, viz:

1. The soldiers named in the order have not applied for furlough, and, consequently, it is to be supposed they do not desire it.

2. The order directs that the furlough of two of the men mentioned shall be dated back to certain and specified days of last month; one to be borne on furlough from the 11th of June, and the other from the 17th, thereby requiring me to represent the last muster-roll of "M" company, already forwarded to Washington, as incorrect: those men being thereon borne as on extra duty in the quartermaster's department.

3. The order is in direct violation of paragraph 182, Army Regulations of 1857, which explicitly says, that furloughs to enlisted men "will be granted *only* by commanding officers of posts, or of regiments, when actually quartered with them."

4. That the effect of the order is to make the position of commanding officer of a company a mere nominal one, taking away from him entirely

the control and command of his company, and depriving him of the privilege *even* of saying whether a man does or does not deserve a furlough; thus destroying the relation between the soldier and the commanding officer of his company, so necessary to the preservation of its discipline, which requires that all papers giving indulgences in the shape of leaves of absence and furloughs be signed and approved by him before being forwarded to the commanding officer of the post.

5. That these men being placed on furlough at this time, and the company having just commenced its system of target practice, to which particular attention was called by a department order, they will lose the entire benefit of it.

For the above reasons I respectfully request that the general commanding the department may instruct the commanding officer of this post to rescind his order to me, placing these men, soldiers of company "M," 3d regiment of artillery, on furlough.

Hoping you will lay this before the general at your earliest convenience, and that it may meet his favorable consideration,

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. V. DE HART,

1st Lieut. 3d Artillery, Commanding Company "M."

A. PLEASANTON,

Captain 2d Dragoons, Act'g Assist. Adj. Gen.

REMARKS.

Although in command of "B" Co., 3d Artillery, the day this appeal was written and forwarded, and wishing to sign it, I was restrained by the fact that the permanent commander of the Co. (then absent at Fort Dallas, on a court-martial,) was to be absent but four or five days.

I publicly endorsed it, however, as a vigorous, just and proper appeal, and suggested the necessity of forwarding it to Head Quarters.

GEORGE IHRIE,

Late U. S. A.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF OREGON,

Fort Vancouver, W. T. July 30, 1859.

SIR: The general commanding instructs me to return the enclosed communication to Lieutenant De Hart, of the 3d artillery, through the commander of Fort Vancouver.

Lieutenant De Hart, in transmitting this communication to these headquarters with his endorsement of the 29th instant, is guilty of the violation of the 441st paragraph of the General Regulations, which is rendered the more culpable by his impertinent and disrespectful letter to his superior, officer, the general commanding.

Ignorance and inexperience accompanying modesty are strong palliatives in the commission of error, but connected with a vain conceit which puts aside in its blindness the rules and regulations by which it affects to be

guided, serve to magnify the confusion and offence of the acts committed under their influence, and to render error criminal.

The commanding is pleased to consider the limited service of three years of Lieutenant De Hart, and is indisposed to visit his conduct with the severity it merits. It is hoped, therefore, this admonition will be sufficient warning to him for the future, and that in his zeal to establish for himself a reputation as a good officer he will not commence his career by proving the reverse.

The commanding officer of Fort Vancouver is directed not to transmit hereafter to these headquarters any communication that is not couched in proper and respectful language in respect to manner, and without strictures or animadversion upon any acts emanating from this or higher authority.

A copy of this communication will be furnished Lieutenant De Hart.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. PLEASANTON,

Captain 2d Dragoons, A. A. Adj. General.

COMMANDING OFFICER,

Fort Vancouver, W. T.

REMARKS.

Approving, as I did, Lieut. De Hart's appeal, I too could not but feel indignant and outraged at these insulting strictures upon, and sneers at, its writer.

GEORGE IHRIE,

Late U. S. A.

HEAD QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF OREGON,

Fort Vancouver, W. T., Dec. 9th, 1859.

COLONEL: I have the honor to return Colonel Merchant's communication and enclosure, with the following explanation.

* * * * *

The third officer referred to by Colonel Merchant is First Lieutenant Henry V. De Hart, who only reported for duty in this department on the 10th day of July last, and was placed in arrest on the 31st of that month.

The short space of twenty days was sufficient for Lieutenant De Hart to develop his character.

He began by writing an impertinent and disrespectful communication to his commander, myself, which was returned to him three times by my orders, for which he insulted my staff officer, Captain Pleasanton, attempting to hold him responsible for my acts, and charging him with shielding himself behind his official position after insulting him.

Charges have been duly preferred against Lieutenant De Hart for this conduct, and were submitted to the War Department for its action. Nothing since has been heard from them; but on the arrival of Lieutenant

General Scott, he informed me the charges would not be entertained by the War Department, and requested me to release Lieutenant De Hart from arrest.

I replied to the general-in-chief, through his staff officer, that I could not consent to the release of Lieutenant De Hart, as it would be impossible for me to maintain discipline if such outrageous conduct was permitted to pass unnoticed.

The general-in-chief then gave me a peremptory order to release Lieutenant De Hart from arrest.

* * * * *

I am, colonel, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. S. HARNEY,
Brigadier General, Commanding.

Colonel S. COOPER,
Adjutant General, U. S. Army, Washington City, D. C.

REMARKS

On Brigadier General Harney's letter to the Secretary of War, dated December 9, 1859, which the Secretary has courteously caused to be sent to me, evidently against the wishes and expectations of the writer.

This act of the Secretary, with the rebuke that went direct from him to Brigadier General H., on the 7th instant, may, it is hoped, somewhat disabuse the latter of the besotted notion that he and his principal staff officer will be supported at Washington, no matter what blunder either of them may officially commit.

At the foot of page 3 the brigadier general says that I had informed him his charges against Lieutenant De Hart "would not be entertained by the War Department." This is an error with a motive. What I did say, or authorized Lieutenant Colonel Thomas to say in my behalf, was simply this: that from some slight allusion to the charges against Lieutenant De H., volunteered by the acting Secretary of War, in conversation with me at my last visit to Washington, I thought it doubtful whether a court would be ordered for the trial of the lieutenant on those charges; and in the meantime, as the lieutenant's services were needed, I wished the brigadier general to suspend the arrest, and to have the credit of doing a generous act. But this was not to his taste, which satisfied me that his object was not *discipline*, but *vengeance*. Hence I ordered the suspension myself, and added, expressly, in the order, that in case the War Department should appoint a court for the trial of the lieutenant, his arrest could then be renewed. Indeed, from the beginning I was surprised that the prosecutor should desire to place his charges before a court, as, to me, it appeared certain that the accused would not be the greater sufferer by an investigation.

* * * * *

In the several quotations from the letter in question, it is plainly seen why the letter was clandestinely sent (over my head) to Washington, against the prescribed and indispensable rules of military correspondence.

In dismissing this most nauseating subject, I beg permission to add, that the highest obligations of my station compel me to suggest a doubt whither it be safe in respect to our foreign relations, or just to the gallant officers and men in Oregon department, to leave them longer, at so great a distance, subject to the ignorance, passion, and caprice of the present headquarters of that department.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

NEW YORK, February 14, 1860.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, February 7, 1860.

SIR: The Secretary of War has considered your application to bring Lieutenant De Hart to a court-martial, and General Scott's order to you to release him from arrest.

The Secretary perceives that the lieutenant has committed a grave breach of discipline in assuming to make any personal demand on your staff officer respecting your orders. But he must agree with the general-in-chief that the lieutenant had good cause to complain of the orders without he had not merited censure, and that your reprimand was not in a proper style. The Secretary regrets to be compelled to express his disapprobation of it, and he does not see that he can reverse the decision of the general-in-chief.

* * * * *

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

S. COOPER,

Adjutant General.

Brig. Gen. W. S. HARNEY,

U. S. Army, Commanding Department of Oregon,

Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory.

REMARKS.

It is to be remembered this man Floyd was the personal and political friend of Harney; who, but for the protests of an officer of the Army, would have proven a pliant tool in Floyd's nefarious attempt to swindle the U. S. out of a large and valuable portion of the Fort Leavenworth Reserve.

And yet, notwithstanding Floyd "regrets" he is compelled to administer a water-gruel reprimand; Harney has lately been denouncing, in presence of officers of the Army, his old friend as "a damned scoundrel, who, but for him, would have been impeached."

GEORGE IHRIE,

Late U. S. Army.

Endorsements of the Commander-in-chief upon a similar appeal of another gallant and meritorious officer who was arrested, and against whom charges were preferred, by Harney.

MAY 10, 1860.

I solicit the Secretary's close attention to this case. I am greatly mistaken if an instance of tyranny so useless and vexatious ever occurred in our army before. * * * *

It is nowhere stated in what particular the letter was deemed disrespectful; perhaps in omitting before the name of the staff officer the prefix *captain*. In everything else Lieutenant Hodges was courteous and respectful. Is it not intolerable despotism that for such slight and probably accidental omission the gallant adjutant of the 4th infantry and intelligent judge advocate of a general court-martial, should be put into close confinement, like a felon, for months, and denied all communication with higher authority?

I trust that a court may be refused, and, but for application to the Secretary for one, I should instantly order Lieutenant Hodges to be relieved from arrest.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

P. S.—I ought to add that there have been more arrests by Brigadier General Harney and his immediate friends since he has been on the Pacific than perhaps ever occurred before in twice the number of troops in the same time.

W. S.

I am aware that Lieutenant Hodges has been released from arrest, and it is hoped some redress may be accorded to him for an act of stupid outrage which has never been surpassed even in the Turkish army.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, May 18, 1860.

GENERAL: Your letter of the 4th ultimo, transmitting charges and specifications against First Lieutenant Henry C. Hodges, adjutant 4th infantry, is received; also an appeal by him to General Scott.

The Secretary does not, from the papers submitted by you, see that the lieutenant has committed any offence, and therefore directs that he be discharged from arrest until the further order of the department.

I have the honor to be, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant General.

Brigadier General W. S. HARNEY,
U. S. Army, Commanding Department of Oregon,
Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory.

CONCLUSION.

Notwithstanding the strong provocation, I have not written a tithe of what I have learned, from undoubted authorities in St. Louis and this city, concerning Harney's private character, commencing many years ago with his "Shakesperian pursuits" in New Orleans.

Respect for his dead,—regard for the feelings of his living,—prevents me lifting the veil from a chapter of his life, which, if known, should make him abhorred among men.

I am conscious of contending against omnipotent wealth, the *eclat* of high military rank, and powerful political partizans, whose tenure of office, thank God! expires to-day; but I have a right, it becomes my duty, to impeach the character for veracity and integrity of an irresponsible and craven-hearted assailant.

For what I have written, I hold myself personally accountable: or, to use the language of the gallant and chivalric SUMNER, in reply to a field-officer of Dragoons who unofficially waited on him to know whether or not he would fight Harney, "I will meet him in ten minutes, or in ten years."

Several officers of the Army, for whom I entertain feelings of respect and esteem, have suggested to me "to let this matter drop;—not out of any respect for Harney, but to keep these Army quarrels from before Congress and the public."

Were the "matter" confined to the Records of the War Department alone, I should have reluctantly complied with their wishes; but as it has become part and parcel of the archives of Congress, and my official defence has been unjustly and unaccountably withheld therefrom, to the surprise and indignation of friends in and out of that honorable body, justice to myself and them demands this publication.

Whether or not it is to rest here, is to *me* a subject of profound indifference.

"For time at last sets all things even—
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong."

GEORGE IHRIE,

Late 1st Lt. 3d Reg't U. S. Artillery.

WASHINGTON, D. C., 4th March, 1861.





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